

Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Permit Program Policy Directive



TO: Taxis, Access & Mobility Services Staff and Interested Parties

FROM: Julie Kirschbaum, Director of Transportation

THROUGH: Kate Toran, ^{kt}Taxis, Access & Mobility Services Director

DATE: August 21, 2026

SUBJECT: Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Permit Program Policy Directive

This memorandum directs San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) Taxis, Access & Mobility Services (TAMS) staff regarding the issuance of permits for curbside electric vehicle charging operations in San Francisco. This directive reflects due consideration of the public interest and is based on findings and analysis by the SFMTA, SF Environment Department (SFE), and SF Public Works (PW).

In accordance with San Francisco Transportation Code Sec. 918 and Chapter 46 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, TAMS staff are directed to issue permits for curbside Electric Vehicle charging. This permit program has five (5) key processes:

- **Operator Permit** - Issue Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Operator Permits (Operator Permits) to qualified applicants on a rolling basis. Operator Permits will be issued for an initial two-year term with an option to extend one or more extensions of up to 10 years.
- **Site Permit** - Issue Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Site Permits (Site Permits) to qualified operators possessing Operator Permits (Operators). One Site Permit can cover multiple Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (Charging Stations) located within a quarter-mile radius. Additional Site Permits will be required for each proposed Charging Station outside of the quarter-mile radius and each new Charging Station within that radius not applied for in the initial Site Permit.
- **Final Permit Sign-off** – As part of the Site Permitting process, provide a final permit check to ensure that all other requisite permits (e.g. PW excavation permit), have been obtained and issue a final permit sign-off to authorize the installation of Charging Station(s).

- **Designate Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Stalls:** The City Traffic Engineer may designate on-street Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Stalls per San Francisco Transportation Code, Division II, Section 208, following the Engineering Public Hearing. Posting of notice and public hearing requirements set forth in Sections 201(b) and 202 of the Transportation Code shall apply.
- **Monitoring and Compliance** - Monitor the performance of each Operator to determine their adherence to the applicable permit terms and conditions. As part of this ongoing monitoring, the SFMTA will evaluate compliance with all plans and proposals submitted in the Operator's applications, which will be incorporated into each permit by reference. SFMTA staff may make policy recommendations, including amendments to the Municipal Codes if necessary.

The actions detailed in this memorandum ensure that the Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Permit Program (Program) continues to serve the public interest by providing curbside Electric Vehicle charging options and maintaining safe and accessible public rights-of-way, while also continuing to provide opportunities for charging innovation.

Background

To support the transition to 100% zero emission vehicles by 2040 as established in San Francisco's [Climate Action Plan 2026](#), the City has identified Electric Vehicle charging, both curbside and off-street, and public and private, as important to meeting the charging needs of San Francisco's residents, businesses, and visitors. Approximately 65% of households in San Francisco rent their homes, often in older, garage-less, multifamily apartment buildings; they are a key demographic who will make use of public curbside Electric Vehicle chargers. A [2020 International Council on Clean Transportation study](#) found that San Francisco will need 1,760 public chargers by 2030 to meet growing charger demands. There are currently 1,067 public Level 2 chargers and 237 public fast chargers installed in San Francisco, leaving an additional 450 chargers to be installed within the next five years in both on-street and off-street parking locations to meet anticipated needs.

In 2024, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors (Board of Supervisors) passed [Resolution No. 326-24](#) affirming support for SFMTA and the SFE, in partnership with PW, the SF Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), and the SF County Transportation Authority

(SFCTA) to conduct a [Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Feasibility Study](#) and pilot a curbside Electric Vehicle charging program. In 2025, the feasibility study was completed by the consulting firm Arup, in collaboration with city staff.

The study analyzed six areas – permitting, jurisdiction and decision-making, electrical grid capacity, site suitability and accessibility needs, financial feasibility, and equity considerations – to identify friction points, hurdles, and roles that need to be resolved to ensure San Francisco can successfully implement a curbside charging program as it works to realize its climate goals. The study also conducted an intensive literature review and developed case studies for peer cities that have more mature curbside charging programs and engaged key stakeholders and charging industry leaders to inform the report’s findings.

Through interagency coordination, staff assessed permitting requirements, utility infrastructure constraints, streetscape design considerations, accessibility requirements, maintenance responsibilities, and long-term funding models. The study identified risks and opportunities associated with operating a curbside charging network and developed practical solutions and recommendations to advance from a pilot to a permanent and scalable initiative.

Building on this foundational work, the [Curbside EV Charging Pilot](#) (Pilot) was implemented in collaboration with the Mayor’s Office, SFE, SFPUC, PW, and other city partners. This coordinated approach was structured to increase alignment across agencies with jurisdiction in the public right-of-way, utility grid operations, accessibility compliance, and climate policy goals. The City also received feedback from the three providers in the Pilot.

The Pilot provided valuable insights that will help strengthen and streamline the Citywide Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Permit Program. The Pilot highlighted opportunities for improved coordination across city permitting requirements and underscored the importance of community engagement to build support and address local needs. The Pilot also offered clarity on site selection within San Francisco’s dense urban environment, identified ways to better plan for grid access and readiness, and provided practical learnings about the feasibility of different technologies.

In May 2026, the Board of Supervisors amended the Administrative Code in Resolution No. 260407-027 to authorize the SFMTA to establish a permanent curbside Electric Vehicle charging program and issue permits to allow for the installation and operation of Charging Stations on City sidewalks. The SFMTA will design and implement the Program in a manner that discourages use by commercial fleet vehicles and prioritizes access for private vehicles by focusing on installations in locations with households that are more vehicle reliant. This approach is intended to maximize the availability of curbside charging for residents who lack access to off-street parking or private garages, consistent with the legislative intent to expand equitable Electric Vehicle charging opportunities throughout San Francisco.

On April 7, 2026, the [SFMTA Board of Directors \(MTAB\)](#) amended Division II of the Transportation Code to establish the Program and set general permit requirements, delegate authority to the Director of Transportation to establish permit terms and conditions and designate curbside Electric Vehicle charging stalls and establish the associated fees and fines for the Program.

Permit Application / Initial Assessment

The application review for both the Operator and Site Permits will consist of an Initial Screening and then Pass/Fail review, as detailed below. Terms and Conditions as outlined in Exhibit A of the Permit Application apply to both the Operator and Site Permits as applicable.

The Initial Screening consists of a review of each Operator and Site Permit application to determine responsiveness and acceptability. This review confirms whether the application meets all threshold requirements, including:

- Completeness of the application
- Compliance with required format
- Responsiveness to the material terms and conditions of the permit requirements

Applications that successfully pass the Initial Screening will advance to the second phase, which is a rating of pass or fail, in all sections. Applicants must pass all elements in each section to receive a passing grade. Any applicant who receives a failing grade in

any section will be notified and provided with an opportunity to provide passing responses.

The table below outlines the criteria used to evaluate applications on a pass/fail basis.

Rating	Pass/Fail Criteria
Pass	The applicant demonstrates a high level of commitment and strong capacity to address known challenges and concerns. The response is clear, well-organized, and specific, and it exceeds the minimum requirements.
Fail	The applicant demonstrates only a minimum level of commitment to meet Program requirements; the response is not clear, well-organized, nor specific, and the minimum requirements are not fully met.

The Operator and Site permit application materials will be published on the SFMTA’s Program web page.

Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Operator Permit Application

The Operator Permit application shall require the following information: an attestation of the applicant's experience, qualifications, financial readiness, and ability to meet reliability requirements and compliance with permit terms; the applicant's agreement to comply with data reporting requirements; a description of the applicant's technological solution and business and operational model including typical pricing structure and communication processes; and a general site plan indicating where the chargers will be installed.

The following sections are to be addressed in each applicant's Operator Permit application.

- Section A – General Site Plan
- Section B – Experience and Qualifications
- Section C – Equity / Pricing Plan
- Section D – Data Reporting and Privacy Plan
- Section E – Proof of Insurance

Operator Permits will be issued to applicants who successfully meet the Initial Screening criteria and meet all the requirements of all sections of the application. Permits will be distributed on a rolling basis.

Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Site Permit Application

Following issuance of the Operator Permit, qualified Operators will be required to obtain a Site Permit to begin installation. One Site Permit may cover multiple Charging Stations located within a quarter mile radius and may be referred to as a site cluster. Additional site-specific permits will be required for each proposed Charging Station outside of the quarter-mile radius or for each new Charging Station not included within an already approved Site Permit.

The following sections are to be addressed in each applicant's Site Permit application.

- Section A – Specific Site Plan including Accessibility Plan
- Section B – Installation and Infrastructure Requirements

- Section C – Neighborhood Outreach Plan
- Section D – Equipment and Safety Standards
- Section E – Operations and Maintenance

Site Permits will be issued to applicants that successfully meet the Initial Screening criteria, pass all required sections of the application, and meet the site factors and eligibility requirements in Transportation Code Section 918(c)(2).

Equity and Overconcentration

In approving Site Permit applications to move forward in the process, the City aims to prioritize an equitable distribution of locations. The City may consider elements such as density, socioeconomic demographics (considering the [City's Environmental Justice Communities](#), the region's [Equity Priority Communities](#), and the State's Priority Populations for climate investments [[Low-Income or Disadvantaged Communities](#)]), proximity to multiunit dwellings, and/or Supervisorial district.

A Site Permit application may be denied if issuing a permit would lead to an overconcentration of Charging Stations in the public-right-of-way; cause an imbalance in the geographical distribution of stations which are part of the Program; or otherwise not be in the public interest.

Final Permit Sign-off

Operators must obtain any other applicable pre-installation permits from other City Departments (e.g. excavation from PW). SFMTA staff will confirm all requisite permits have been obtained and issue a final permit sign-off to authorize installation of Charging Station(s).

Designate Electric Vehicle Charging Stalls

The Director of Transportation is authorized to designate on-street Electric Vehicle charging Stalls per San Francisco Transportation Code, Division II, Section 208, following the Engineering Public Hearing. Posting and public hearing requirements set forth in Sections 201(b) and 202 of the Transportation Code shall apply. The SFMTA shops will install Curbside Electric Vehicle stall signage and paint for approved Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Stalls.



Sample On-Street Electric Vehicle Charging Sign (18" x 24"):



Accessible On-Street Electric Vehicle Charging Sign (18" x 6"):



On-Street Electric Vehicle Charging Pavement Markings:

All on-street Electric Vehicle charging stalls will include on-street pavement markings to increase visibility and public awareness of this curb use. Similar to on-street car share spaces, white pavement markings—or “batter boxes”—will be installed to clearly delineate the boundaries of each charging stall.

Monitoring and Compliance

Staff are instructed to monitor the performance of each Operator to determine their adherence to the permit terms and conditions. As part of oversight duties, staff will collect data on charger utilization, reliability, and community feedback. These findings may result in future policy recommendations for regulating curbside charging deployment, including amendments to the Municipal Code if necessary.

Parking enforcement: Non-Electric Vehicles or Electric Vehicles that are not actively charging may be subject to citation pursuant to California Vehicle Code Sections 22511.1(a) or 22511.1(b).

Permit Renewal for Office of Emerging Technology (OET) Permits

Existing Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging Pilot permittees holding PW OET permits, shall be required to apply for a permanent SFMTA Operator Permit prior to the expiration of the OET Pilot Permit no later than three (3) months prior to the termination date of their OET Pilot Permit per OET permit section 5.8H(c).

Additional Electric Vehicle Charging Initiatives

Additionally, the City is engaged in a number of initiatives to further support public EV charging and ensure safe, equitable access to charging infrastructure citywide, including:

- [San Francisco EV Readiness Code](#) requirements apply to residential and commercial new construction buildings and existing buildings with major alterations.
- Implementation of the [Commercial Garage EV Charging Ordinance](#), which requires large commercial garages to install EV charging equipment to expand publicly accessible charging options.
- Deployment of [public fast chargers in Bayview–Hunters Point](#), including the installation of high-speed DC fast chargers at Bayview Plaza, developed through extensive community engagement to address charging gaps in underserved neighborhoods.

- Continued rollout of the City's [EV Charge SF](#) incentives, which provide financial and technical assistance for installing Charging Stations at multifamily and commercial properties to broaden public access.
- Guidance and tools to support setting up publicly accessible Electric Vehicle charging in the City and County San Francisco are available on the [San Francisco Public EV Charging Guide](#) webpage.
- Incentives are available for electric cars and charging stations, with current information available on SFE's [Electric Car Benefits, Incentives, and Resources](#) webpage.
- [SFPUC's Statement of Interest form](#) can provide an initial determination of electric service provider to applicants and guidance on submitting the appropriate service application.

Additional Program updates may be shared via the SFMTA's Curbside Electric Vehicle Charging webpage: [SFMTA.com/CurbsideEVCharging](https://sfmta.com/CurbsideEVCharging)

Reference Documents

[April 2026 SF Board of Supervisors Ordinance – Administrative Code Amendments](#)

[April 2026 SFMTA Staff Report and Legislation](#)

[April 2026 San Francisco Climate Action Plan](#)

[April 2025 Curbside EV Charging Feasibility Study](#)

[October 2020 International Council on Clean Transportation Charging Demand Report](#)